

the Republicans to power, it was useless for her to look across the Atlantic. Why should she not knock again at England's door ?

On December 5, 1921, the French Ambassador put before Curzon, " in a purely private capacity," certain views which he had been turning over in his mind. The Tripartite Treaty, he began, was dead, and in any case France now wanted something else. Such a unilateral guarantee by two Powers or one was humiliating, and it turned on the definition of the word " unprovoked." What he had in mind was something much more precise, a defensive alliance against aggression, direct or indirect. The latter was the more likely. For instance, a resuscitated Germany, perhaps in combination with a resuscitated Russia, might launch an attack upon Poland, which France would regard as almost equivalent to an attack on herself. England, of course, viewed the Poles in a different light, yet such an event would involve a menace to her as well. When Curzon inquired what advantages such a treaty would bring us, the Ambassador replied that France would be able to reduce her armaments as we desired, Germany could be admitted to the League and would be dissuaded from a fresh attack, and the three Powers could co-operate in the reconstruction of Russia. Curzon was not impressed. England, he pointed out, disliked military alliances and written engagements. In the first wave of enthusiasm she had joined in the Anglo-American guarantee, but now she was asked to give a pledge alone and in a much more comprehensive form. Moreover, British opinion had not approved certain aspects of French policy. Was the consideration of the treaty of alliance to be accompanied by a liquidation of all outstanding disagreements, for instance, in Morocco and Egypt ?

A fortnight later Briand visited London, but failed to move the Government from its standpoint of limited liability. The two Powers, he proposed, should guarantee and defend each other's interests all over the world. British opinion, replied Mr. Lloyd George, was not prepared for such a spacious commitment. We were ready to guarantee France's eastern frontier, but not to be mixed up in Germany's quarrels with Poland. France, replied Briand, wanted more than such a regional assurance. Other nations, including Germany, might perhaps enter a partnership corresponding to the recent Four Power Pacific treaty. Strict military obligations were not essential, but the partners would consult if their interests or